

bill which the House will consider later this week.

The Republican leadership has labeled this bill the "Straight A's" bill. But as someone who knows a little something about education in this country, I can tell my colleagues that this bill should be called the "Straight F's" bill. The Straight F's bill fails our children, it fails our schools and it fails our taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support flexibility in Federal education funds. As a longtime school reformer, I strongly support innovation that will improve education for all of our children. However, this bill fails to meet these standards in several ways.

The Straight F's bill fails our schools by undermining the national commitment to education, the Straight F's bill fails our children by eliminating the targeting of funds to high poverty areas, and the Straight F's bill fails our taxpayers by doing away with accountability standards and allowing tax money to be spent on ways that will not best suit our students.

Mr. Speaker, I call on this Congress to reject H.R. 2300.

We should reverse course and support school construction, teacher training, technology upgrades, after school care, year-round schools, School Resource Officers, character education and class size reduction initiatives that will improve education for our children.

USE THE BIG RED PEN

(Mr. HAYWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, 9 months ago the President of the United States came to this Chamber and delivered his State of the Union message where he proposed a budget that would only save about 60 percent of the Social Security surplus and take the other 40 percent and put it into more spending. And here is where that spending rests in this budget proposed by the President of the United States.

Now, there is good news, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, the leadership of the House and Senate went to the White House and at long last the President now agrees with the congressional majority. He says he wants to save 100 percent of the Social Security surplus. Now, Mr. Speaker, the real work begins.

Mr. Speaker, I would invite the American people to do as one of our leaders did. Senator LOTT took a big red pen to the White House as a gift when they sat down to talk over the budget and invited the President to go through his massive spending programs and start using the red pen.

Let us cut out wasteful Washington spending, Mr. Speaker. Folks should dial the White House at 202/456-1414 and say, Mr. Speaker, "Use the big red pen." Cut Washington waste.

SOCIAL SECURITY

(Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I think I heard last January this President saying that he did not want to do anything with Social Security, that he wanted to put it aside to make sure that it was solvent, that he was not going to use any parts of any Social Security until we have fixed it.

Now, I do remember that. It seems like my Republican colleagues are continuing to say that the President is spending Social Security. It is outrageous for the Republicans to pose as defenders of Social Security, Mr. Speaker, when we know that they have raided the Social Security funds. Remember who these people are. They are the enemies of Social Security. They want to eliminate it through privatization.

Listen to this gimmick. Listen to the rhetoric. Please, American people, remember January of this year, it was the President who said that he did not want to use Social Security funds, that he wanted to ensure Social Security solvency and Medicare reform. Do not listen to the rhetoric of the folks on the other side.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BE-REUTER). Members are reminded again that they are to address their remarks to the Chair, to the Speaker.

STATE FLEXIBILITY FOR THE MINIMUM WAGE

(Mr. DEMINT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. Speaker, Americans are most secure when they are most free. Because of welfare reform, the poorest Americans in every State have begun to realize the benefits of freedom because we have asked the States to find jobs for people on welfare. The States have responded. In fact, the number of people on welfare in my home State of South Carolina has fallen by 63 percent in just 3 years. Over 70,000 South Carolinians now have productive jobs and have been set free from government dependency.

I believe it is time to give our States more flexibility so they can build upon these successes. It is time to trust our States with the minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, another increase in the national minimum wage will make it harder to get people off of welfare. One size does not fit all and Washington does not know what is best for every State.

I urge my colleagues to support State flexibility for the minimum wage and help secure the future for Americans now on welfare.

VOICES AGAINST VIOLENCE

(Mr. UNDERWOOD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, there is a wonderful event going on in Washington, D.C. these past 2 days, and this is the Voices Against Violence event which is sponsored under the leadership of Democratic Leader DICK GEPHARDT.

Under this event, a number of young people, over 350, and their chaperons, have come to Washington to discuss the issue of violence in schools and safety in schools. I am proud to announce that our own representative, which ironically came the farthest to Washington for this, Joanna Manuel, a 10th grader at Simon Sanchez High School, and her chaperon, Mrs. Jennifer Shiroma, are avidly participating in Voices Against Violence.

As a former high school administrator, I know full well that the key to education is feeling safe and secure, particularly at the secondary school level where there are so many issues that young people have to attend to, so many temptations as they go through their development and trying to find their way in life and trying to learn content at the same time.

I want to congratulate the Democratic leadership for this fine event.

SOCIAL SECURITY LOCKBOX HELD HOSTAGE

(Mr. HERGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday congressional leaders and the President agreed not to raid Social Security funds to pay for next year's government spending. I wholeheartedly congratulate them on this agreement. Social Security was created in 1935 for the purpose of protecting senior Americans, not as a pool of cash accessible to those wishing to grow big government.

Mr. Speaker, this House approved my Social Security lockbox legislation 145 days ago. Yet, on six separate occasions, the minority party in the other body has voted to stop this Social Security lockbox legislation from even coming to the floor for a vote.

Mr. President, please join me in calling for the other body to free our Social Security lockbox bill they have held hostage for 145 days.

DEMOCRATS WILL PROTECT SOCIAL SECURITY

(Mr. UDALL of New Mexico asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to tell you that our friends on the other side of the aisle have picked the lockbox on the